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This Perilous Year

*A Report on the State of the People
of the Union*



**BY
THORNWELL JACOBS**

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE
OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY PRESS
OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY
GEORGIA
1936

PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

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The contents of this pamphlet comprise an address made by Dr. Thornwell Jacobs, President of Oglethorpe University, before the Committee of One Hundred at Miami Beach, Florida, January 28, 1936. This printing for the private use of Carl O. Hoffmann, 30 Broad Street, New York City.

FOREWORD

Some three and a half centuries before the birth of Christ there lived a very wise man in the city of Athens, the then intellectual center of the world. His name was Diogenes, he of the lantern, peering into the faces of passersby, looking for an honest man. On one such occasion, meeting a friend he said, abruptly, "Bury me on my face when I am dead!" And when his friend inquired as to the reason for so strange a command, he replied, "Because in a little while everything will be turned upside down." For the purposes of this discussion, Diogenes might well have died in the United States during the first decade of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER ONE

AMERICA ABROAD

In this overturned world of today there are seven Great Powers, by that meaning that there are seven organizations of human beings better equipped than any other such organizations to murder men and women wholesale, on land, on sea, under the sea and in the air. It is not difficult for any of us to recall the names of these seven great military powers: the British Commonwealth of Nations, the French Empire, the German Reich, the Japanese Empire, the United States, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the Kingdom of Italy. Of these seven, four are gorged with landed possessions. The British Empire sprawls all over the earth. Although it is not generally known, the French Empire is a close second in size. Russia covers the northern half of two continents, and the United States dominates the whole western hemisphere. There remain three of the seven whose populations are congested, whose natural resources are limited and whose national ambitions and aspirations are denied. These of course, are Japan, Italy and Germany. There are three latent wars in the determination of the leaders of each of these three countries to secure for their people better places in the sun. The seventy million Japanese, confined to tiny islands whose combined size is approximately that of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida and whose arable land is less than that which California enjoys, constitute an explosive so great that the League of Nations quailed before it. The expansion of Japan is already taking place. First Korea, then Manchukuo and now a part of China fall under her dominion. It seems quite possible that five great provinces of China—Chahar, Suiyuan, Shansi, Hopei and Shantung will shortly be set up as a dependency of Nippon. The expansion of Italy is also in process of effectuation. Her forty two million people, living in a land of less than one hundred and twenty thousand square miles, or just about the size of Georgia and Florida combined and enjoying resources of an exceedingly limited character, have taken the shortest way

out of their dilemma and, under the leadership of a modern Caesar, are reaching out for new lands and new resources. These, most unhappily, lie very close to the medulla oblongata of the British Empire.

The third latent war lies in the expansion of Germany which is just as certain and inevitable as that of the two other great military powers whose demands have been denied. Either Germany will be given ample territories for her normal expansion or she will endeavor to take them as Japan and Italy are now doing. "When I know that Germany", said Winston Churchill recently in London, "is spending much more than eight hundred million pounds in warlike preparations in the course of a single year; that she is ruining her finances and depriving the German people of pork, butter and other foodstuffs in order to turn the whole nation into the most prodigious and terrible fighting machine the world has ever seen, I cannot help asking, for what is this terrible preparation made and what awful event hangs over the future of Europe?" It is strikingly apparent to students of modern international relations that **the expansion of Japan threatens the integrity of Russia, the expansion of Italy threatens the integrity of the British Empire and the expansion of Germany threatens the integrity of France.**

How striking is the contrast between our own country and the six other great powers of the world! Of the six, three are definitely on the march, determined to increase their resources, enlarge their prestige and expand their territory. The three others are grimly tenacious of all that they at present hold, determined to fight, if necessary, in order to defend their empires. Against these two sets of aggressive, expanding countries on the one hand and of static, tenacious countries on the other, stands America, the only one of the seven which is **not only not aggressive and not tenacious but which is actually giving up its former winnings and withdrawing from its former spheres of influence and contracting its former borders.**

This is all the more remarkable because **America was founded by a race of empire builders.** It was men of the same breed who poured down from their homes on the Iranian plateau to destroy the ancient kingdoms of Babylonia and Assyria and to set up the

Persian Empire in their stead. Of the same stock came the tribes who destroyed the Mycenaean civilization of ancient Greece and who later, under Alexander reconquered vast expanses of eastern Asia. Theirs also was the blood and the spirit which gathered together all peoples whose homes bordered the Mediterranean under the banner of ancient Rome. Brothers in blood and courage were the conquistadors who added a continent to the dominions of Ferdinand and Isabella. Passing over the North Sea, they took the British Isles as theirs and in the early days of the seventeenth century, the first waves of their westward migration broke upon the shores of North America. For one hundred and fifty years they battled with the wilderness and with the Indians and with their motherlands until they had set up a new nation, "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." A map of the territorial growth of the United States, familiar to all students of American history shows the strip of thirteen original states which constituted the American union along the Atlantic seaboard as of the year 1783; the rich northwest territory, added in 1787; the Louisiana purchase from France in 1803 made by Thomas Jefferson who "looked up the law for it afterward;" the territory of Florida ceded by Spain in 1819; the empire of Texas annexed in 1845; the Oregon country, added in 1846; the Mexican cession of the far southwest in 1848; the Texas cession of 1850; the Gadsden purchase in 1853; and the Alaskan purchase in 1867, not to mention the annexation of Hawaii and of the Phillipines and Porto Rico in 1898, of the Panama Canal Zone in 1904 and of the Virgin Islands in 1917. Thus the history of our territorial expansion up to the good year 1917 shows thirteen separate purchases; or cessions obtained by purchase, if possible, by war if necessary; one for each of the thirteen states of the original union. In short, the record of the United States of America up to the close of the First World War, reveals a dominant and conquering nation, expanding in overwhelming numbers and force.

Today the picture is astonishingly different. A new spirit has swept over our people. With practically unanimous consent and approval we have withdrawn our forces and influences from

Nicaragua and from Haiti. In cancelling the Platt amendment we have burned the bridges between ourselves and Cuba. We have withdrawn from the Phillipine Islands. We have repudiated, in effect, the Monroe Doctrine. We propose to surrender our right of intervention in Panama. We are adopting a new policy of neutrality which, in times of war, scuttles our rights upon the high seas. We have adopted the policy of withdrawing our own people from the so called "marginal lands" in our own country. We have adopted other policies which will inevitably contract our international trade. In short, we are withdrawing into ourselves in a way utterly different from anything that has ever happened in American history. **That a profound psychological change has taken place** in the spirit of the American people is evident. Is this wisdom or is it senescence? **Is it loss of barbarism or loss of nerve?** It is well to remember this startling reversal of form in our international relationships as we take up the consideration of a few outstanding domestic developments.

CHAPTER TWO

AMERICA AT HOME

The United States of America was founded under dire compulsion, the compulsion of fear, **the fear of three great and terrible tyrannies**: the tyranny of the state, impersonated in the King, the tyranny of the church, impersonated in Archbishop and Pope and the tyranny of the rabble, impersonated in the mob. America was founded in impassioned love, **the love of three great liberties**: liberty of body, liberty of soul, liberty of property.

The Constitution of the United States is a contract between **thirteen little nations, designed and adopted to allay these three fears and to preserve these three liberties**. Every device known to the Fathers was used to make it effective. Over against the tyranny of the King they established the two houses of Congress with full and complete powers, alone, to make laws for the nation. Over against the persecutions and tyrannies of organized religion they decreed the absolute separation of church and state, leaving to the conscience of each citizen the choice of his gods, whether and which. Over against the uncertain will of the fickle populace as represented in the House, they set the conservative Senate. To guard the judgement and execute the laws of Congress, they set the presidential veto and added to it the command sole and complete, of all executive power and all armed forces of the nation ordaining that the chief executive should be selected, not by the unthinking and turbulent populace, the "*mobiliū turba quiritiū*" of Horace, but by the choicest statesmen. Against the combined Congress and Executive they set the reserved powers of the states, decreeing, in the tenth amendment to the Constitution that neither the Congress nor the President should have rights nor exercise any authority not expressly given them by the Constitution, reserving all other rights and authorities to the people and to the states. Then as if that were not enough, they set up a unique thing, a Supreme Court, to see that the contract for the preservation of individual liberty and for the extirpation of the trinity of tyrannies should not be broken forever.

In short, the men who made America did not trust kings, saints or common people to govern the nation. They knew that kings and saints were too intelligently and powerfully selfish and the common people were too carelessly and ignorantly greedy. **They knew that a tyrant was a bloc personified and a bloc was a tyrant multiplied.**

As one contemplates the Constitution, it seems that in providing this complete group of checks and balances, the founders of America had taken account of every danger and provided for it a remedy; but they had not. **They overlooked one thing.** They did not calculate on it because they did not foresee that America would, some day, be populated by men and women whose thoughts would not be their thoughts and whose ways would not be their ways. They took it for granted that the warcry of the Revolution "Give me liberty or give me death" would continue to be the supreme sentiment of their successors. It did not occur to them that Americans would ever be willing to sell their heritage for a mess of pottage. They presumed that the fellowship of suffering which through seven long years of tumult and carnage had welded together thirteen small nations, having little in common but a burning love of individual liberty and a language in which to express it, would permanently warn and pledge their successors and descendants never to sell or surrender the thing which had made America and which America had made. It never occurred to them that sons and daughters of those who had been harried and hunted and tormented and tortured and enslaved and imprisoned and in the end literally driven from one continent to another on account of espionage and inquisition and persecution by king and pope, by autocrat and emperor, by rabble and mob, would deliberately return to such abominations "like a dog returning to its vomit." In short, they could not conceive of thirty or thirty million shekels inducing sons and daughters of the Revolution to betray liberty into the hands of its enemies. Yet see what has happened, is happening and may happen in the United States of America.

It was Plato who warned us more than two milleniums ago that revolutions are not brought about by philosophy nor by science nor by politics but by great disasters such as pestilence or famine and more particularly by great and devastating wars.

Revolutions follow wars because men are willing to make money out of wars, but are not willing to pay for them. So hath it happened here.

For the fears of those courageous, liberty loving men who founded America are now in process of rapid realization. With deliberate purpose and with skillful aim, an attack upon the liberties of the American people is now being made, of such overwhelming power as to raise the question **"Is the end of personal liberty in the United States at hand?"**

It is a well known adage that history has long roots. A thoughtful writer has said that all wars begin at least twenty years before they are declared. Certainly our present situation goes back to the vast catastrophe which overwhelmed the whole world in the year 1914. Previous to that time, America was a blessed land. Doubtless those of us who remember any part of the years between 1875 and 1914 consider them to be the happiest period in all the history of the United States. There was a definitely balanced adjustment between production and consumption, between exports and imports, between farming and industry which afforded almost perfect opportunity for the exercise of individual talents and for the attainment of personal happiness. Came the war. Almost immediately we found ourselves flooded with gold. All of the great nations of the world, Britain, France, Russia and Italy, summoned their men from plough and lathe and flung them into the battle line. They placed orders for vast quantities of all kinds of materials and goods in America, spent thousands of millions of dollars with our manufacturers and our farmers and made of the United States the center of world trade. Very quickly our indebtedness to Europe, amounting to about six thousand million dollars was changed into an indebtedness of Europe to us of about ten thousand million dollars. Our whole commercial and industrial set-up was dislocated by the manufacture and distribution of an unprecedented volume of our products for foreign markets. After the war had ended, fearful of a collapse, we proceeded to lend other thousands of millions of dollars to our customers with which they were induced to continue to buy our merchandise. Thus good money was thrown after bad until the total amounted to between thirty and fifty thousand million dollars, prac-

tically all of which was lost. Followed a strange psychological change in the spirit of our people. Forgetful of the fact that the years between 1914 and 1930 were abnormal years of inflated, fictitious values, when they were over, we looked back upon them as days of prosperity and proceeded to curse our leaders for taking away from us the flesh pots of that artificial Egypt. We demanded a return to "prosperity." We were not willing to pay for our folly. We refused to go back to normal conditions. Having taken millions of our citizens away from our farms where they were able to support themselves entirely by raising all needed foodstuffs and having brought them to the cities to manufacture war supplies and having turned our farms into manufacturing establishments, devoted to the production of specialties, largely for export; when the unusual demand for our goods ceased with the end of the war and when we were thrown back upon our own resources we were like a hive of bees, struck by some passing accident. We were ready to sting any and everything within our reach.

Our first point of attack was our own government. We spoke of discarding democracy and individualism and personal liberty; of detailed governmental control of wages, costs and prices. Unwilling by frugality and economy and self sacrificing patience to rebuild faithfully the structure which we had arbitrarily destroyed, we looked around for other shoulders on which to place the burden and we found the big, broad back of our Federal Government. By excessive borrowing and excessive wastes and excessive extravagances we had already very largely bankrupted our city and state governments, but the credit of the Federal Government was still intact.

Now while our politicians may deny us many things, there is one thing that they never deny us. No politician from the beginning of time has ever refused to accept power and authority. Also very few politicians are willing to tell their constituents the brutal truth about their condition. This combination of facts has brought America to the verge of destruction. **The American people were bankrupt;** their total debts, governmental and personal and corporate, amounting to something like two hundred twenty-five to two hundred-fifty billion dollars was more than the salable value of all of the property in the United

States. In such a moment of desperation there arose an overwhelming demand from practically every person in the United States, that the Federal Government should take charge of the situation. Heeding that command and enlarging it with their own ambitions and aspirations, our political leaders proceeded to take steps which would destroy the foundations of our former constitutional government in America.

One of the first of these steps taken was the elimination of a most powerful check on governmental folly, a check which was not included in the Constitution but which was built up outside of, though not in defiance of its authority. I refer to the control of money which, up to a short time ago resided in the hands of those who owned it. There are many definitions of money, some good, some bad and some indifferent, but to the ordinary man living an ordinary life in an ordinary way, money means work. It represents the product of one's labor. **Wages are the labor of today; capital is the labor of yesterday.** Money buys so much effort or the results of so much effort. Now it just happens that mankind, in endeavoring to arrive at a measure of labor which is money as modified by the law of supply and demand, has, after centuries of experimentation, settled upon gold as its most satisfactory measure. The reason for this is very simple. The supply of gold varies less widely and the demand for gold remains most constant of all materials that have ever been tried. It just happens that the amount of gold that has, as yet, been found in the crust of the earth, has not been subject to violent increases or decreases. For example, if tomorrow, a great mountain of gold were to be discovered the value of gold as money would be eliminated forever. It is the simple fact that such a mountain of gold has not been discovered but that gold ores are distributed with remarkable evenness, throughout the world which has made it such a fine measure of value. People have faith in gold because they do not believe that such a mountain will be discovered and such faith is the basis of its value. If any other money should be made, in which men have an equal faith, it would be just as valuable as gold. We know that there is a limit to the amount of gold that is being mined but is there a limit to the amount of paper that can be printed? That is the question that people ask because

they do not have as much faith in government as they have in gold. Nature protects them from mountains of gold. Who will protect them from the mountains of greenbacks?

So when the government of the United States segregated all of the gold of this country and placed it directly under the control of the Congress, it destroyed one of the ancient, though non-constitutional foundations of liberty. Hitherto when a stampeded or an unthinking Congress passed a law that endangered the value of labor and of property it was within the power of any citizen of the United States to flee to a "city of refuge;" to purchase gold, which had an international value, and to hold on to it until the danger was passed. This privilege has now been destroyed. Today a dollar is no longer so many grains of gold. **IT HAS BECOME SO MANY VOTES IN CONGRESS.** This is gravely significant and from it many consequences inevitably follow.

But perhaps the most astonishing of the results which came from our headlong flight to the Federal Government for protection, has been the proposed destruction of State rights. The tenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads: **"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the states are reserved to the states respectively and to the people."** Perhaps more than any other paragraph ever written in America, these words preserve the rights of individual human liberty. They were put there in abject fear, created by age-long experience that the three fatal tyrannies would sooner or later destroy the right of private opinion, private assembly, private religion and private property. Yet how can the Federal government assume complete authority over the support and living conditions of its citizens without destroying state lines? And if the sovereignty of the states be destroyed, all local representation in the most important matters goes with it, not only, but also the main office of every business in the United States is immediately transferred to Washington. Our executive committees no longer meet in their home city. They meet under the shadow of the capital. Our state legislatures also meet there. So we have been treated to the astounding spectacles of governors and legislative committees, of mayors and other high officials of city, county and state,

pilgrimaging with hat in hand to Washington, begging for appropriations to save themselves from their own follies. The Federal Government, having absorbed the money of America, is rapidly absorbing her component states, also.

Of course, with this done, the matter of the absorption of private liberty is a simple thing. The next step indeed is to say, with the Nazis, "We spit on liberty.". In America we change it to: "Give me my bacon and eggs. To hell with liberty." That is the way that the most precious possession the world has ever provided, **a possession for the preservation of which the Southern States in particular reddened their every river with blood**, has come to be regarded in an age whose God is gold and whose law is: "If you get by with it, it is right." Bacon and eggs so obtained soon become stale bread and water and the citizen an economic slave.

All of which Thomas Jefferson, the keenest political mind that America has yet produced, foresaw over a century ago: "Our government," he wrote, "is now taking so steady a course as to show by what road it will pass to destruction; to wit: by consolidation first and then by corruption, its necessary consequence . . . When we must wait for Washington to tell us when to sow and when to reap, we shall soon want bread."

So we are in the midst of a great tidal wave of public demand that government should relieve the citizens of the necessity of thrift, frugality, and work by guaranteeing him a living and leisure. The age-long sanctions of God in nature which punished the lazy, the inefficient, the thriftless, with hunger and want and suffering is to be supplanted by a new requirement: the industrious **MUST** divide with the sluggard, the frugal **MUST** divide with the spendthrift. Step by step all the incentives which have, for millenniums, impelled and compelled men and women to toil and save and deny themselves are being destroyed and the masses are being taught that they are entitled to a living wage when they can work and to a pension when they can not. Formerly we supported the government, and its office holders and administrators were responsible to us. It is now proposed that the government should support us, thus making the citizens responsible to the government. That fear, the fear of the merciless tyranny of Government is the "Fear itself" be-

fore which liberty does well to tremble. It is now the duty of the citizen to support the government only so long as the Government supports the people.

What will be the effect of these new doctrines upon the character of American citizens? Or more to the point, what has happened to the character of the American people that they adopt and welcome such doctrines? The fountains of the great deep have been broken up, not by the order of Townsend nor of Thomas nor of Sinclair nor of Olsen. These men are but white-caps, riding its rising flood which is drawn almost equally from all parties. Its mighty waters will certainly overwhelm America unless a bulwark is built at once which is strong enough to break it. **THAT BULWARK MUST BE BUILT OF COURAGEOUS, INTELLIGENT, PATRIOTIC CITIZENS WHO LOVE HISTORIC AMERICA.** To adopt a well known paragraph: "Our opponents say, 'Come with us and join the swelling tide!' We say, No, come with us and dam the swelling tide." Nine wise old men have temporarily stayed the waters of that flood; but they are aged as they are wise and may be replaced at any time. It is important to note that this is not a question of new deal nor old deal nor square deal nor round deal. It is a question of the integrity of the players. Neither the deal nor the cards are of paramount importance if the players raid the winnings.

There is a phrase—"rugged individualism" which used to stand for all that is good in American character; for manliness, courage, independence, self reliance, efficiency, industry, frugality, strength; why has it become a term of opprobrium used in the same way and for the same purpose as "capitalistic", "anti-social", "exploitation?" And the word capital, it used to stand for a sure measure of that part of one's labor and efficiency which had not been spent or dissipated as earned but stored away in a spirit of foresight for rainy days by persons who thought it a disgrace to be dependent on the charity of others or upon the tax payers of their community for support. What has happened that we now curse those hard-earned savings as instruments of oppression and consider it every citizen's right to be supported out of the public treasury?

CHAPTER THREE

AMERICA WITHIN

Between the years 1607 and 1936 ten generations of our people have lived on American soil. We are, therefore, face to face with the amazing fact that out of ten generations of Americans, ours is the only one which has incontinently surrendered its independence, its privileges and its liberties to the politicians saying: "Three centuries of liberty are enough!" That is why we find ourselves today in the midst of an unfinished war of government against industry; of politicians against business; of predatory blocs, organized for loot, against the individual citizen.

Can such a people survive? Can they meet the competition of those nations that are still willing to toil for long hours—at hard labor—for small sums—sacrificing present leisure for the privilege of independent self support? What is going to happen to America a generation after she surrenders her place in the race for international trade? Judging herself by herself and comparing herself with herself, is she wise?

Three centuries of hard and unrelenting toil, of self sacrificing thrift and frugality, by a tough, strong, independent race of "rugged individualists" have built the happiest, richest, safest, freest nation on earth. Will the coming years see all of this magnificent accomplishment destroyed by those who deny the excellence of their methods and the virtue of their motives? It has happened many times before in history. **Is America immune to the laws of nature?**

The answer to these question involves another even more fundamental and significant. We find ourselves not only asking: Has America lost her nerve, but also, Has America lost herself, her soul? **Certainly, something has departed from the character of our citizens**, something that endangers the very fundamentals of society. The thing that is gone is very difficult to define because it is compounded of many elements. Among them are the craving for independence, the love of individual liberty, patriotism of the sort which sacrifices for the country, scorn of public charity, ability to suffer without whining; and in their place

have come dependence on others, demands for governmental support, complaints and accusations against the more successful and definite unwillingness to pay the price necessary for prosperity. It is the present psychosis of the American people which imperils the nation. All these and similar psychoses are symptoms of the determination on the part of organized blocs to obtain money from the common treasury by process of mob appropriation.

Consider, for example, the ominous significance of the fact that the bonus bill, after having been successively vetoed by every President to whom it had been presented for signature, was overwhelmingly passed over their vetoes by a congress, acutely mindful of approaching elections. Even the popularity and courage of President Roosevelt availed nothing, his veto, having been summarily over-ridden. And yet the American public and their congress have been repeatedly told that the United States lost less than 60,000 dead in the World War and less than 300,000 wounded, whereas France and England and Germany lost some four or five millions, each, and Italy about two and a half millions, and that, nevertheless, we are paying out annually for veterans' relief ten per cent more than England, France, Germany and Italy all combined, with Canada thrown in for good measure. On this basis, our annual veterans' bill would be less than twenty million dollars per year, instead of a thousand million, for whereas last year we spent \$2,688.66 for every American soldier killed and wounded in action, Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany and Canada spent \$53.60 for each soldier killed and wounded. And what was the most compelling argument made by the proponents of the bonus bill? Just this—that if the Government could afford to give many thousands of millions of dollars to Tom, Dick and Harry, it could afford to pay the soldiers what it owed them. The psychological implications of this argument are utterly devastating. When the public treasury becomes the public grab-bag, the end is not far distant.

It has come to this pass in America, that legislation in Washington as well as elsewhere has become the resultant of the blows delivered by organized blocs of selfish interests. Congressmen and Senators spend their vacations appearing before these

pressure groups, telling them how they voted for this or that bill in their favor, how they have loved all the members of the bloc and have gotten for them every possible appropriation and grant. And the Senators and Congressmen know perfectly well that if they do not do this dirty work there will be no return to Washington in the autumn. A member of the faculty of Yale University recently stated it concisely:

'The pension system in the United States is an abuse which has escaped from control. There is no longer any attempt to cope with it. It is the share of the 'common man' in the great system of public plunder. 'Graft' is only a proof of the wide extent to which this lesson to get into the steal is learned. It only shows that the corrupt use of legislative and political power has affected the mores. A disease of the mores is a disease of public opinion as to standards, codes, ideas of truth and right, and as to things worth working for and the means of success. Such a disease affects everybody. It penetrates and spoils every institution. It spreads from generation to generation and at last it destroys in the masses the power of ethical judgement.

Literally millions of citizens are demanding the earnings of others as a **matter of right**. They refuse to take the risk of self support. They demand a living of the government, which means of their neighbors. They attack the conditions under which employers offer them work as the equivalent of pauperization. The employers themselves are arraigned as thieving exploiters and are rapidly turning over their thankless jobs to the government which from now on will become the object of vituperation. Regardless of the laws of economics they demand that the wealth of the country should be re-distributed; as if the Supreme Court itself could devise a way whereby the vitality of an athlete or the mentality of an inventor or the skill of an executive could be equally divided among all of the people. They cannot see that there is no such thing as a man's being wealthy, that he can only control wealth as the goose controlled the golden eggs she laid. They would, by law, take away the power to lay the golden egg from the employing class of people and bestow it upon public officials. Some of them would take pictures of the golden egg and pass them off for real gold. These

are they who are demanding fiat money. With childish faith millions importune Congress to make them prosperous by law. Each day they pile more debts on the government and more anathemas upon those who believe in the old fashioned things like toil and frugality and savings and independence and liberty.

In short, the problem that confronts us is not political, nor economic, nor financial. It is the problem of the human soul. What can restore the courage, the patriotism, the independence, the willingness to suffer and endure and sacrifice, possessed by a generation which has passed? What can restore their honesty, their morals and their simple faith in God? Until these things are restored, there will be no happiness in America.

The most depressing element in the situation is that this disease of the spirit which has affected us all has, at last, **poisoned the five great arteries which feed the American body politic.** The oldest and least affected of the five is the church which still feebly bears witness to the old sanctities, the old verities and the old ideals. Yet, even in the religious world some of our church organizations have become little better than minor political parties and almost universally the church is displaying everything in its show windows except religion. The American school is the next oldest and those who have watched its steady departure from its ancient moorings will not be surprised to learn that it has now become an organized bloc, equally predatory, and even more powerful than most of its associates. The third is the press, dependent absolutely for its existence upon the money of its subscribers and advertisers, compelled to pander to their taste in offering to them constantly sensational stories of every evil thing and tendency that American public life holds. Brave indeed is the owner and publisher of a modern daily who dares to eliminate from his columns all exploitation of crime and all publicizing of the baser elements of life. That there are some who still do so is a fine tribute to the power of ideals. The same is true of the other two main arteries which supply the life-blood of the nation, the cinema and the radio. The average taste of the average American is the law of their existence. They must supply what the public wants or they perish. If the mind of the public is diseased the columns of the press, the flitting pictures on the silver screen and the invisible suggestions of the radio are

likewise diseased. Yet the most potent force in the spiritual life of an individual or of a nation is suggestion. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The human mind is like a sponge, fill it with poison and it will not absorb the most nourishing liquids. As long as one's attention is fixed on an idea, for example, a crime story, that idea dominates the mind and is all that the mind knows. **Keep an idea there long enough or put it there frequently enough and it will grow roots and stick and finally becomes part of the man himself.** Suggestion is the supreme power. Whatever is in the focus of attention is, **for the time being, the mind itself.** It is a fact that our mass consciousness is of so low an order that it has defiled the church and school and press and cinema and radio. They are what they are because we compel them to be so, because everything in America is made to sell.

If the picture which I have painted seems hopelessly sombre, it is because I have tried to draw it with utmost clarity and frankness, endeavoring to play the part of a good physician who must know the nature and cause of the disease before he can prepare his medicine for its cure. No prognosis may be safely offered until the worst is known of the ailment from which the patient suffers. Surely by now we should know that it is a lesion of heart and soul and strength and mind from which our whole body-politic suffers. We have forgotten the thing which was uppermost in the minds of the men who founded America. **We have forgotten what the constitution is for. We have forgotten what the United States is for. We have forgotten what life is for.**

And for what were these things made—the constitution, the nation and life? Has the question ever been more perfectly answered than in the trenchant statement: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." And wherein does life consist? Are not constitutions and nations and lives totally meaningless unless they are founded upon and for the free, unlimited development of the individual human being and his education, his "leading out" to that height of attainment and excellence which is the supreme goal of existence? Is not this the heritage which has come down to us through the ages? Is it not the pearl of great price which, having discovered, a man

sells all that he hath in order to obtain it? Indeed what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose himself? For as Henry Drummond used to say: "This world is a workshop; not where men make things, but where things make men."

Three times during the ten thousand years of human history, humanity has risen to a supreme height in the search for the answer to the question I have just stated. The greatest minds in the three greatest eras of all history have crystallized their conclusions into three unforgettable words upon which the civilization of our present day is founded. One of these words comes from Athens and is the product of a millennium of Greek civilization. One of them comes from Rome and is the product of a millenium of Latin civilization. The third comes from Jerusalem and contains the quintessence of all religion of all time.

The three represent phases of a supreme ideal which is the ultimate in human striving. The Greeks had a word for it. It was 'areté. The nearest English equivalent is perhaps our word excellence or virtue. Yet, 'areté means more than excellence or virtue. It was the ideal of perfect manhood or womanhood. Just as there is a perfect sunbeam and a perfect drop of water and a perfect nightingale, so there should be a perfect man. The elements of manhood, as conceived by the Greeks, included, therefore, excellence and virtue not only, but also dignity and honor and integrity and all that should be included in that oft-quoted motto:

"To thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Let us compare this ideal with what we see about us. The present scene reveals the people of America being taxed to death to support myriads of parasites as a consequence of the colossal blunder of murdering millions of our fellowmen and allowing our treasure houses and our whole credit system to be robbed and raped in order to do it. With our resources destroyed, hunger has been added to avarice. International carnivores have become domestic cannibals. The confiscation of private property and its redistribution to organized blocs of voters has begun. The tyranny of government is well on its way. The liberties of

the people are being taken away from them. Those who created the wealth are being destroyed. That which created the wealth is being destroyed. We have perverted the government of our fathers until we now have a system whereby, in our governing bodies, seats are purchased by the appropriation of public monies to selfish blocs of voters, organized for purposes of loot. Instead of buying the private vote, we buy votes wholesale. The worst indictment that has been made against any nation is now being made against the United States and it is this, **that our rudders have become weathervanes.** Yet, although we have done our best to degrade them, our political leaders are nobler and finer than their constituents. A democracy perishes if any large proportion of its citizens are unpatriotic and predatory and ignorant. **There is no way to choose a noble, patriotic, public spirited legislature from an ignoble, greed-driven, dishonest electorate. When such people must be pleased in order to secure re-election, disaster inevitably follows.** Our kind of government can be a success only when an educated, patriotic and honest citizenry supports the government as our fathers did, for the sake of justice and protection, not for the sake of bounties and bonuses. Every great civilization that the world has ever known has perished possessing the best laws and the best government and the greatest wealth that the world had ever seen—and the most debauched people. Any kind of government will work successfully if the citizenry is honest and high minded. None will work well if a large proportion of the people are dishonest grafters, men without 'areté, men who grin at virtue and excellence.

The second word, which represents an equally important part of the heritage that has come down to us out of the ages, comes to us from Rome. It is "justitia" and the best rendering of it in English is "justice", of which the best interpretation is **law and order.** It is the sense of fairness, of square dealing, of ordered life which has distinguished those nations which have endured long upon the face of the earth. All this we know and yet today our sense of law and order, our sense of common justice has sunk so low and our ethics have descended to such bathos that in our country the chief crimes of the decalogue have been developed into profitable businesses. Private murder has become

a business. Private robbery has become a business. **Public robbery has become a business.** Bootlegging has become a business. Hijacking has become a business. It is no exaggeration to say that in modern America a woman's virtue is of but little greater moment than was the kiss of her grandmother. The church and the college are burlesqued and travestied daily and as a climactic illustration of our lawless life, our most distinguished young hero has felt it necessary to expatriate himself in order to rear his family in safety. "For justice has turned away backward and righteousness standeth afar off. For truth has fallen in the street and equity cannot enter. Yes, truth is lacking and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey."

The third of these great heritages comes from Jerusalem and is the summation of one thousand years of spiritual life of the Semitic race which more than any other has given to the world its religious ideals. The word is best known through its Greek equivalent. It is "dikaiosúne", and it means righteousness. Just as 'areté represents the supreme ideal of man with reference to his own development, and justice, justitia, represents the supreme ideal of man with relation to his fellow human beings, so dikaiosúne stands for the relationship of humanity to its creator.

"As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold, I will build me a nest on the greatness of God.
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space twixt the marsh
and the skies

By so many roots as the marsh grass sinks in the sod
I will mightily lay me an hold on the greatness of God."

After all, it is indeed "righteousness that exalteth a nation." It is an ever abiding sense of duty and obligation that ennobles a people. "There are two things", said Immanuel Kant, "that overwhelm me with wonder and awe, the more that I think upon them. One is the starry sky above and the other the moral law within." "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." "There is a Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness", and any nation which scorns or flouts that Power "It were better for it that a millstone were hung about its neck

and that it should be cast into the sea." For it shall certainly "be cast into hell with all the nations that forget God." Your own judgement will tell you whether, in your opinion the United States of America is a Godly country. I shall simply say that in my opinion, we have neglected all the fundamental laws under which we may continue to possess our lives, our liberties and our various pursuits of happiness and these include our money and our properties. We have allowed the ethics of our people, their morals, their education in the true sense of the word, to go uncared for and now everything is in danger. More than two milleniums ago one of the wisest of seers described a similar situation: "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity—the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores—Your hands are full of blood—cease to do evil, learn to do well." We shall have to begin all over again and start where our ancestors started upon the general principle that **the only important thing in any nation is the personal character of its citizens.** Old fashioned virtue and old fashioned honesty and old fashioned self sacrifice and old fashioned unselfishness and old fashioned courtesy and old fashioned honor and old fashioned prayer to an old fashioned God—only these things can save America.

For America's conscience has been paralyzed and her masses feel no shame nor are they capable of indignation when they see vice licensed for the sake of profit. **They sympathize with the criminal** and have a fellow feeling for their pals, the law breakers. To them there is nothing ominous in the announcement that their governor has pardoned a new batch of murderers adding them to the 500,000 already loose in the United States. And when they hear that their home city mothers twenty murderers to one in London, they think that there must be something wrong with England. Beginning with the underworld, this sympathy with crime extends upward and its corruption finally pollutes the political forces, the district attorney's office and the jury box. Newspapers, radios and cinemas vie with one another in exploiting each new murder until **crimes are actually committed for publicity's sake.** As one murderer put it. "Do you think I will get as much publicity as Hauptman?"

The notoriously criminal tendencies of our American citizenry in the light of the known facts of history are thoroughly understandable and they should be constantly kept in mind. They go back to the original immigrants who settled the United States. The facts are as stated by Beard: "At least one half of the immigrants into America before the Revolution, certainly outside of New England were either indentured servants or negro slaves. To the great number of involuntary immigrants, were added thousands of convicts who were either sent by English judges or who chose deportation in place of fines, prisons, stripes or the gallows." We may as well be frank about it and honestly confess to ourselves that the pre-revolutionary population of the United States consisted, in vast majority, of the types above described, nonconformists in religion and rebels in government, who fled the old country because of their unreconstructed individualism. They were constitutionally opposed to restraints of any and all kinds and they brought with them to America the spirit of rebellion, revolution and nonconformity. They found a wilderness wherein there were no laws and their whole history from that day to this has been one of constant opposition to ordered government.

Even the religious sects, such as the Huguenots, the Pilgrims and the Puritans as well as the racial groups such as the Scotch-Irish, only added strength and power to the anti-nomianism of early America. The post-Revolutionary history of the United States has been of the same sort. Literally millions of outlaws, the offscourings of European civilization, have for the last one hundred and fifty years been coming to America and have formed in our large cities the underworld which is the avowed enemy of all law and order.

In short, the underlying heredity of the great majority of Americans is one of utter lawlessness. We are and always have been, an unruly people, delighting in few things more than breaking the rules of the game, and for this disease there is no known cure. The only palliative is time.

The most serious consequence of all the above facts is that there is an immense mass of public opinion in the United States which is in sympathy with the criminal element of our population. As a result of this sympathy, it is very difficult to convict law-

breakers and when they are once convicted sob sisters, by the millions, demand their pardon. So tender hearted and sympathetic is the American public toward even the most hardened criminals that our penitentiaries and jails tend ever more constantly to become palaces of comfort and country clubs for the temporarily inconvenienced.

The contrast, both in amount of criminality and consistency of sanctions, between our country and Great Britain is startling. We treat our criminals always with careful regard for their feelings and social standing, and in England they are promptly eliminated from public life. As a consequence, there are more murders in many American cities than there are in the whole of Great Britain combined.

In short, if I may put a still finer point upon it, at the present moment and in this perilous year, we are now witnessing the disintegration of a civilization, the dissolution of a social order and the degeneration of a whole nation. Our moral standards, our ethical judgements, our religious ideals are melting in the fires of lust and avarice. Greed, cynical and selfish, is plunging America into darkness. The old foundations, the ancient heritage of 'areté, justitia and dikaiosúne are perishing. Even liberty wavers before unprecedented attacks and, as Walt Whitman said, "When liberty goes out of a place it is not the first to go, nor the second, nor the third to go. It waits for all the rest to go and is the last."

So what? I would not have permitted myself to have painted so dark a picture for you were it not for the fact that I honestly believe that this darkest hour is just before the dawn.

The hour for a renaissance of America to her old power and strength of spirit has come. Everything that is precious in the nation faces possible disaster, and you are they who must ring the alarm bells throughout the United States. It is not true that 2% of our population own 80% of our wealth but it is true that far less than 2% own 80% of our musical genius, of our literary ability, of our inventive capacity, of our executive skill and of our moral leadership. That 2% is the salt of the earth but if the salt has lost its savour wherewith shall America be salted? The hope of this country lies in the fact that its business men and its professional men, its bankers, its manufacturers, its mer-

chants and the great middle class of its educated thinkers have become alarmed at the loss of their liberty, not only, but also at the reason for its loss, which is the degeneracy of the average American citizen. If the liberty and independence and the free development of the individual, unhampered by bureaucracy, autocracy and totalitarian controls, is to be saved, it will be saved as it was given, by 2% of the American people, and that 2% will represent the historical knowledge, the political acumen and the moral leadership of the nation.

The time is short, the danger great, the work immense, THE TASK IS YOURS.

“Let time and search, O king, declare
Which men in all thy city’s bound,
Were loyal to the kingdom’s care,
And who were faithless found.”

No two tasks are exactly alike. Each of us must stand in his own doorway and change his surrounding environment. I, for example, find myself the president of a small American college. As my problem is typical of all of the eight hundred colleges in the United States, so is it vastly important. Perhaps no one has expressed the problem that lies before an American college president better than W. R. Inge, Dean of Saint Paul’s Cathedral in London. “The industrial revolution,” he writes, “has generated a new type of barbarism with no roots in the past. For the second time in the history of Western Europe, continuity is in danger of being lost. A generation is growing up, not uneducated but educated in a system that has no connection with European culture in its historical development. The classics are not taught; the Bible is not taught; history is not taught to any effect. Its chief characteristic is profound secularity or materialism—and it has no ideals beyond the visible and tangible world of the senses.” This caustic comment of Dean Inge does not overdraw the gaping wounds of modern education. In it there is almost a complete absence or *’areté*, *justitia* and *dikaiousúne*—of virtue, law and righteousness.

Citizens unacquainted with the present day conditions on an American university campus often find, to their surprise that there is no thought, nor word, nor deed in Washington or New

York that does not find its intra-mural counterpart. Every crime known to law, including kidnapping, murder and planting of communist cells, has its equivalent in the student body of the American college, unless wise and thoughtful men take steps necessary to prevent them. When Woodrow Wilson was asked, shortly after he became President whether he was not dazed by the intricacies of national politics, he replied: "Not at all. They are child's play compared with college politics." If, then, our greatest evils can be prevented or ended within university walls—and our experience at Oglethorpe proves that they can be—they can also be prevented or ended in the nation at large; and by the same method. It is a chronic disease from which we suffer and demands a chronic cure. Just as the well-being of each individual cell determines the health of the body, so the well-being of each individual student, of each individual citizen, determines the health of the college or the nation.

Before this present tidal wave of neo-barbarism, the presidents of the larger institutions are already confessedly powerless. If the continuity of our great traditions and the priceless heritage of the past are to be saved to American education, it will devolve largely upon the small colleges, where the personal influence of the officials is paramount, to see that it is done. I have taken that as my part of the job. **IN YOUR OWN OFFICES AND HOMES YOU ARE IN POSITION TO PUSH THE BUTTONS OF MUCH VASTER INFLUENCES. THE THINKING AND READING PUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES, THOUGH THEY MAY COMPRISE LESS THAN 2% OF THE POPULATION, CONTROL THE DESTINES OF THE NATION. UNTO THEM MILLIONS LOOK FOR GUIDANCE AND SPIRITUAL STRENGTH. PUSH THAT BUTTON NOW OR LATER YOU MAY FIND THAT THERE IS NO CURRENT IN ITS WIRES.**

Over the Germanic library at Harvard University is this sentence from Goethe:

"Es ist der geist der sich den koerper baut."

It is the spirit that builds for itself a body.

The spirit of our fathers clothed the skeleton of the constitution with the body of America, a body radiant with virtue, justice and righteousness. Shall our descendants speak of ours as the

generation that traded such a heritage for "bacon and eggs?" I think not. The alarm bells are ringing all over the United States. The forces of sanity and the passion for liberty and the love of historic America are taking possession once more of the millions who have been so busy making money that they have had little care for the health of the nation. The spirit of our country is stirred as it has not been since 1876 and 1861. America is too young, too strong, too virile to sink into the senescence of autocracy or into the "Slough of Despond." There are too many people who love their country, not only, but also who have faith in her ability to win

"God out of knowledge,
And good out of infinite pain,
And sight out of blindness,
And purity out of a stain."

And yet we know that America is in peril. America needs help. America needs you! In this perilous year she is stumbling blindly through her Valley of Decision; "A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, even to the years of many generations. . . .multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the Valley of Decision."

"These, then, are my last words to you"—I quote William James—"the faithful fighters of this hour, or the Being that shall then and there represent them, may then turn to the faint hearted who here decline to go on with words like those with which Henry IV greeted the tardy Crillon after a great victory had been gained: 'Hang yourself, brave Crillon! We fought at Arques and you were not there!'"



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